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"HOME OF THE HERON"
By George Inness

—Courtesy J. G. Snyder, Chicago

Two Great Artists—Inness and Wyant

WHERE does the genius, with original ideas, come from and how does he happen? It is a wonderful circumstance when an artist creates pictures, which are original and which continue to appeal to art lovers long after the

work of their cotemporaries has been relegated to obscurity. Why should the paintings of George Inness grow in value year by year while those of men who lived in his time, such as the brothers Hart, are neglected? And the companion of Inness,



"ADIRONDACK WOODS"
By A. H. Wyant

—*Courtesy Moulton & Ricketts Galleries*

A. H. Wyant, has left works, of remarkable originality, which are increasing in value day by day. Picture collectors are vying with each other to secure examples of Wyant's work. The value of these two men's pictures have increased wonderfully; and in the same category we find Homer D. Martin and Blakelock. These four, much alike, but also unlike, hold a unique position in the estimate of connoisseurs.

The *American Art News* publishes a letter from *Arts and Decoration* on "Increasing Value of American Paintings," written by Robert Vonnoh, who introduces a letter sent him by Mr. Evans, the well known collector of American pictures, which says:

"I give you some instances of augmentation of value of paintings by American artists. Mr. Thomas B. Clarke paid to George Inness, Sr., \$400 for the 'Gray, Lowery Day,' which brought more than \$10,000 at the Clarke sale. Inness' large 'The Coming Storm' had no bid at the Chickering Hall sale in 1895. Four years ago I could have bought it for \$3,000. A year ago it was purchased by the St. Louis Museum for \$10,000. In 1882 I bought at auction Wyant's 'In the Adirondacks,' for \$720. At the Evans sale, 1900, Mr. George H. Hearn acquired it for \$6,300. It is now valued at \$30,000. Wyant's 'Connecticut Valley' was purchased before Wyant's death for \$1,800. It was insured in a recent Lotus Club exhibition for \$20,000. . . . Mr. Catholina Lambert, many years ago, bought from R. A. Blakelock the large 'Waterfall by Moonlight' for \$600. Mr. Lambert was offered, a couple years since, \$20,000 for it by a dealer. . . . I recommended a friend to buy a Wyant in the sale of 1894, at \$500. I saw the picture at Cottier's last winter, and the price was \$20,000. Wyant's 'No Man's Land' was sold in the Clarke sale at \$550. It brought \$6,500 in the recent Bonner sale, and if it had a less desolate name, it would have sold for \$12,000.

"Yours very truly, William T. Evans."

While Wyant lived in an obscure Ohio village, he saw, in Cincinnati, a picture by Inness which so imbued him with enthusiasm that he got together his small funds and visited Inness in New York. From this grew the warm friendship of many years.

We illustrate here Inness' picture, "The

Home of the Heron." It is the property of J. G. Snyder of Chicago, to whom it passed from the galleries of Moulton & Ricketts. It is on a canvas some three feet in length, and shows a richly toned wood interior. In the broken lower part, amid the autumn shrubbery, are brushed a series of beautiful greens. Beyond this foreground stands the massive trunk of a spreading oak which catches the brilliant sunshine, and contrasts vigorously with the deep shade in the heart of the forest. This sun ray also illuminates the autumnal foliage overhead. The clear green and the yellow foliage make a frame for the real picture, the gleaming tree trunk against the rich darkness. I take the liberty of quoting the following letter from an artist of fine judgment:

"I am exceedingly glad to hear that you have bought the very notable Inness, 'The Home of the Heron.' It is a picture that I know well, having seen the very first charcoal touch upon the canvas and watched its development. It was a favorite work of the great master and a magnificent example of his skill and genius, also, the picture is refining, growing finer every day, with that mellowing which comes to great works. In its luxury, its depth and splendor of color, this picture ranks with the great works of any masters of any school, and in itself amply justifies our belief that George Inness was, and is, the peer of the greatest. I congratulate you very heartily.

"Sincerely, Elliott Daingerfield.

"Written from my home, 'Windwood,' North Carolina."

As a fit companion to this picture we illustrate the work by A. H. Wyant, "Adirondack Woods," a large canvas about four feet high. The tall tree trunks are beautifully drawn, and form the principal subject matter of the picture. In stating that this is a fit canvas to accompany the Inness, we must compare the two with the works of the popular school from which these men drew out to make a school of their own. Wood interiors, of the early American school, were painted at the dictate of a sincere conscience and reproduced with

great faith a multitude of facts. The bark of trees, the leafy boughs were so carefully made as to be individual portraits. The colors, whether of mid-summer or autumn, were exactly copied. While depth and space were properly observed, there was no poetical treatment, no oneness of tone or easy freedom of touch. Those pictures became tiresome because of their intense truthfulness and lack of poetry. What we call "suggestiveness" was absent.

Surrounded by this rather mechanical art, Wyant grew up and developed another expression. In this picture all is tonal, tone for its own beauty, nature not copied slavishly. Not a leafy bough is carefully copied, but we feel as if we were looking into a trembling depth, full of luminosity and space. If we mistake not, this reveals the true mission of the painter.

It is a fit companion for the Inness picture, simply because it is so different in aspect while the same in impression. Inness gives us richness. Wyant gives us silvery color. Both of them are poets, not realists. The enthusiastic admiration for this work is well told in the following letter from Mrs. Wyant:

"Messrs. Moulton & Ricketts, Dear Sirs:

"The picture named 'Adirondack Woods,' size 36x47, a photograph of which is framed with this letter, was painted by A. H. Wyant, several years before his death. It was one of his favorite subjects. He was fond of the picture and so was I. I have had it hanging in my home ever since his death. I have always thought it a fine example of his work, because it has so much of the feeling of nature, and the spirit of the woods, and everyone who has seen it hanging here has admired it. Very sincerely, A. L. Wyant, 141 W. 85th St., New York."



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